

# **The Library Assistant**

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL  
OF THE ASSOCIATION OF  
ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS  
(SECTION OF THE LIBRARY  
:: :: ASSOCIATION) :: ::

HON. EDITOR: A. C. JONES  
WARRINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

**Vol. XLV, No. 4**  
**April, 1952**

## **The A.A.L. Council and L.A. Subscriptions**

**W**HEN the A.A.L. Council met on March 6th, the Council's attitude to the L.A. Council's subscription proposals was considered in the light of discussion at Divisional level.

Discussion was based upon the resolution of a Divisional Committee which, "recognising the necessity for some revision in the L.A. subscriptions, nevertheless believes that the Annual General Meeting, as at present constituted fails to give the necessary means for the expression of the wishes of the whole membership," and went on to urge the necessity of initiating a change in the Byelaws. It was agreed that this latter point be discussed before 1953, and the Council returned to the L.A.'s financial position. It also considered another Divisional view that an increase in subscription was not the only solution to the present difficulty, and advocated a further review of financial policy.

The discussion was long, and because subscriptions are obviously only part of a larger problem, tended to become involved. However, both chair and floor knew and played to the rules, and it is a tribute to both that from an agglomeration of amendments there emerged a motion which was accepted without opposition:—

"This Council approves the policy which has been pursued by its representatives on the L.A. Council, and the continuation of this policy: to press for as little increase as possible in the rate of subscription and to continue to press for economy without reducing the activities of Sections or the educational activities of the Library Association."

The policy referred to was summarised in Council Notes in the February issue of the *Library Assistant* as follows:—

"This [proposed new scale of subscriptions] did not come as a surprise to the A.A.L. Council, who less than two years ago expressed concern on L.A. finances only to be told, in effect, to mind their own business (which under equally difficult circumstances they can claim to have done very well). Now, after L.A. reserves have been further depleted, comes this delayed action."

"The A.A.L. representative on the L.A. Finance Committee was called upon to explain several items not made clear in the last available balance

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sheet, and was closely questioned on the possibility of economy in expenditure as an alternative to, or in partnership with increased subscriptions. The part played by the A.A.L. representatives in the scaling down of the proposed rates was explained, and the Council's attention drawn to an important change in the structure of the proposed scale which spreads more evenly the liability to pay. (At present everyone receiving more than £375 per annum pays at the full rate)."

It was further explained that the A.A.L. representatives had opposed any increase in examination fees on the grounds that any general deficiency, as this is, in the L.A.'s finances should be met by a charge on the membership at large, and not upon one part of it: particularly student members.

W.T.

### *The Inaugural Meeting, 1952*

IT is always a privilege to listen to an enthusiast with the rare ability to set others afire. Professor Galbraith is such a man, and history ("the history of freedom") as seen by the archivist a worthy subject, and those happy few who were present on March 6th must have envied their colleagues at the London School of Librarianship who have learned about "archives" from Professor Galbraith (who abhors the word) instead of in dustier ways. His talk was in fact an exhortation to library assistants to seize every opportunity to secure the preservation in safe custody of old family, court, parish and other papers which might come their way. It would be sacrilegious, perhaps, to say that we had a rollicking evening, yet there was a heartiness in it where the most sympathetically inclined could have expected only a deep interest. "That old humbug, Geoffrey of Monmouth," came alive in a phrase, as also did the philosopher Hobbes ("You know, Hobbes' *Leviathan*, seventeenth century chap—'Who sometimes swore,' says Aubrey, 'but only for emphasis.'") And the speaker himself, of course, was alive all the time. His definition of serfdom, for example, was "a kind of slavery where the people don't live in." ("I've been casting about in my mind all afternoon for a way of saying that; it just shows that you can rise to the occasion if you try.") Printing was put firmly in its place, as a means of ensuring the preservation of original texts, and it was gratifying to hear a professor reaffirming his belief in the public library as the university of the future.

We are greatly indebted to Professor Galbraith for the pleasure and inspiration he has given us. A few score more librarians cannot now help but be "archive-minded," and some perhaps may take heed of the further advice: "Don't stop at being archivists; be historians."

The occasion was that of the induction of Mr. F. A. Sharr, B.A., F.L.A., as President of the Association for 1952. In the unavoidable absence of last year's President, Mr. Clough, the ceremony was performed by the Honorary Secretary.

# ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS

(Section of the Library Association).

## 56th ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st DECEMBER, 1951.

The number of correspondence courses organized, the titles of A.A.L. publications, and the regular appearances of the *Library Assistant* represent some of the work of this Association, and are obviously matters for report. The year under review saw the second week-end Conference successfully completed, and plans prepared for its next, and now probably regular, appearance in our annual programme.

Divisional reports covering the Association's work throughout England and Wales record the meetings and educational activities which are important features in the professional lives of our members.

It is, however, not so easy to record the execution of the other important duty of the Association of Assistant Librarians: that of providing a channel for the expression of opinion on professional matters so that an idea, an ideal or a wrong can be examined, improved and represented.

This is achieved through meetings, correspondence and personal contact; and is recorded in minute books with a terseness which does not do justice to the labour involved. The full record of this work of the Association is therefore in the archives of Divisions, the A.A.L. Council, its Committees, the L.A. Council and its Committees. On these latter the A.A.L. is actively represented—and a motion or question at a Divisional meeting, or even an informal approach to a Divisional representative can, as it passes through these successive stages gather strength (even if it sometimes loses momentum) sufficient to appear in the *L.A. Record* as a decision of the L.A. Council. This does not always happen the first time, but it is to be hoped that the A.A.L. will never lose its reputation for persistence.

Matters which have received the Council's attention during the year have included the application of the N.J.C. award, the policy behind the L.A. Entrance Examination, the work of the A.A.L. in relation to Assistants in Special and University Libraries, and a survey of welfare and conditions. Statistics on conditions of service and welfare in municipal and county libraries have been collected and are to form the basis of a report and recommendations. For the bulk of this important work the Association is indebted to its immediate past-President, Mr. F. C. Tighe.

There were five Council meetings during the year. The following attendances were recorded:—

E. A. Clough, F.L.A. (President) 3; E. V. Corbett, F.L.A. (Vice-President) 5; A. Ll. Carver, F.L.A., 5; W. Howard Phillips, F.L.A., 4; F. A. Sharr, B.A., F.L.A. 5; F. C. Tighe, B.A., F.L.A. 4; Miss E. J. Willson, F.L.A. 5; Miss E. F. Wragg, A.L.A. 5; Miss G. E. C. Edwards, A.L.A. (Bristol) 3; H. J. Richards, F.L.A. (Devon) 4; T. C. Boulter, A.L.A. (Eastern) 5; C. Bayes, B.A., F.L.A. (E. Midland) 4; D. Mason, A.L.A. (E. Midland) 4;

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J. R. Howes, F.L.A. (G.L.D.) 5; L. J. Shaw, F.L.A. (G.L.D.) 5; O. S. Tomlinson, F.L.A. (G.L.D.) 5; S. J. Paget, A.L.A. (Kent) 3; S. J. Brett, A.L.A. (Liverpool) 4; J. S. Parsonage, F.L.A. (Liverpool) 4; H. A. Chesshyre (Manchester) 5; L. Read (Manchester) 2; A. L. Smyth, F.L.A. (Manchester) 4; Miss E. Jerram, A.L.A. (Midland) 5; Miss J. N. Paterson, F.L.A. (Midland) 4; E. F. Ferry, F.L.A. (N. Eastern) 5; C. Smith, A.L.A. (N. Eastern) 5; S. Barton, F.L.A. (N. Wales) 2; R. T. C. Rowsell, F.L.A. (S. Eastern) 5; C. F. Shepherd, A.L.A. (S. Wales) 4; J. G. McPeake, F.L.A. (Wessex) 4; D. I. Colley, F.L.A. (Yorkshire) 4; R. H. Malbon, F.L.A. (Yorkshire) 4; C. W. Taylor, F.L.A. (Yorkshire) 5; J. S. Bristow, F.L.A. (Honorary Treasurer) 5; A. C. Jones, F.L.A. (Honorary Editor) 5; S. W. Martin, A.L.A. and Mrs. L. Martin (Honorary Education Secretaries) 3, 5; W. F. Broome, F.L.A. (Honorary Membership Secretary) 4; G. P. Rye, F.L.A. 2; Miss D. L. Eldridge, F.L.A. 1; and F. A. Cole, F.L.A. 1; (Honorary Publications Officers); W. Tynemouth, F.L.A. (Honorary Secretary) 5.

Committee meetings were held on the same day in each case. Each representative is on at least one committee.

During the year under report the President was able to visit the following Divisions:—Bristol, Eastern, Greater London, Kent, Manchester, North-Eastern, South-Eastern, South Wales, Wessex and Yorkshire.

Three events are worthy of special mention. Mr. Kingsley Martin's address at the Inaugural Meeting; Mr. F. A. Sharr's paper at the A.A.L. Session at the Edinburgh Conference, and the Week-end Conference held at Ashburne Hall, Manchester ((reported in the June number of the *Library Assistant*).

The Council, and the Association, are indebted to the leaders (Messrs. Sharr, Stokes and Tighe), the Librarians of the district who provided facilities for visits, and to the Manchester Division—especially to the local conference secretary, Miss F. McKeand.

### PUBLICATIONS.

The appointment in April of the Honorary Publications Officer, Mr. G. P. Rye, as Chief Librarian, Weston-super-Mare, was a great loss to the Association, and resulted in a temporary reduction in the rate of sale of publications. We are indebted to Miss D. L. Eldridge, who carried on for several difficult months until the appointment of Mr. F. D. Cole as Honorary Publications Officer in November. This appointment coincided with the publication of an important addition to the series of A.A.L. Primers—P. Hepworth on *Assistance to readers*—and of the long-awaited new edition of Phillips's *Primer of book classification*. In view of generally increasing costs it is noteworthy that, by careful budgeting, it was possible to produce both these volumes at the same price as the previous edition of Phillips. A publications list and order form, issued with the November *Library Assistant*, was most successful in encouraging sales, and the year ended with a heartening influx of orders.

Steady progress has been made in the preparation of other publications, and this will bear fruit in 1952. The printing of the second volume of the *A.A.L. Guide*—the Final examinations—edited by Dr. A. J. Walford, was

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already well advanced by the end of the year, and the new *Primer of cataloguing* by Miss D. M. Norris about to be sent for printing.

Every encouragement has been given to members to make contributions to the *Library Assistant*, and the animated discussion of one or two recent articles of a contentious nature augurs well for the future. But there is still a reluctance to initiate such discussion by contributing original articles, and it is necessary for the good health of the Association, as well as its journal, that members should take full advantage of this invaluable means of testing theories, disseminating facts, and clarifying opinions.

### MEMBERSHIP.

1951 has seen another increase in the membership of the Association, which, in view of the competition from the increasing number of sections of the Library Association, is continued recognition of the part that the A.A.L. has to play in professional matters. The comparative figures are:—

1945: 3,277

1948: 4,583

1951: 6,162

In addition to members attached to Divisions, there are members in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Eire, Africa, Australia, India, Italy, Jamaica, Malta, New Zealand, Poland, Spain, and the U.S.A. The distribution of the *Library Assistant* is even more wide-spread.

### EDUCATION.

After twenty-one years of outstanding service, S. W. Martin is no longer Joint Education Secretary. The Association is fortunate that Mrs. Martin is carrying on this very arduous task alone, and we have no doubt that Mr. Martin's interest is undiminished. It would, however, be unfair to lessen any expression of gratitude because the handing-over of office has been so easily and happily performed. The establishment and growth of what is virtually a correspondence college is in itself a record of personal achievement.

During the year, 985 long courses and 262 revision courses were arranged. The provision of revision courses, for students who have already sat the examination, was extended to include subjects at Final level.

The whole of the Entrance and Registration sections, and most parts of the Final, are now covered by standard courses. The Education Committee feel very strongly, however, that students should realise that it is not the course alone which the A.A.L. is offering: only fully qualified members of the profession are appointed to the panel of tutors, and it is only by taking every advantage of the tuition offered with the course that students can hope to pass the examination.

The Council wish to acknowledge with appreciation the work of its tutors and editors, who, by their willing co-operation, allow junior members of the profession to profit by their knowledge and experience; at the same time deploring the lack of enthusiasm sometimes shown by students.

It has been a pleasure to welcome the following members to the panel of tutors and editors:—Messrs. E. F. Ferry, F.L.A., E. R. J. Hawkins,

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F.L.A. (Editor), J. L. Hobbs, F.L.A., E. E. Moon, F.L.A., K. A. Mallaber, F.L.A. (Editor), W. G. Thompson, F.L.A., Miss M. Hudson, F.L.A., and Mrs. M. Toley, F.L.A.

Resignations have been received with regret from:—Messrs. S. H. Barlow, F.L.A., E. J. Coates, F.L.A., W. E. Maskell, F.L.A., F. A. Richards, F.L.A., and Miss N. K. Firby, F.L.A. Sincere thanks are tendered to them for all the work they have done for the correspondence courses. It is good to hear that Mr. Barlow has recovered from his serious illness and the Council hope to welcome him back to the panel some day in the near future.

Although the work of the A.A.L. Education Committee is mostly in connection with the provision of correspondence courses, it also concerns itself with all matters relating to professional education. The agendas of its meetings always provoke plenty of vigorous and enthusiastic discussion, and all students may feel assured that their interests are well watched.

The Council are pleased to report that good use is still being made of the A.A.L. Library, now combined with that of the Library Association at Chaucer House. Mr. D. C. Henrik Jones, F.L.A., Librarian and Information Officer of the Library Association, reports that 2,404 issues were made during the year from the A.A.L. Library, and 159 books added to its stock, which now totals 1,752 books. His enthusiasm has always been evident in the willing co-operation he has shown in his relations with the A.A.L. Education Committee, who wish to record their thanks for his services.

### FINANCE.

The rate of capitation paid to the A.A.L. has remained unchanged since 1929. By skilful management and a successful publishing record, the finances of the Association have, until this year, been a matter for congratulation. The rising costs of printing, stationery and travel have now fallen heavily upon us, and the future outlook is one of grave concern.

### PERSONAL.

There is no rule that promotion to Chief Librarian involves resignation, but it has become a custom which at times seems hard. During the year such promotions have lost to the Council the services of S. W. Martin as Joint Honorary Education Secretary; G. P. Rye as Honorary Publications Officer; K. J. Lace, and the Vice-President, E. V. Corbett. It is perhaps exceptionally unfortunate that Mr. Corbett, who has served the Association so well at national and divisional levels, should have, by a few weeks, denied himself the honour of Presidency: he was at the time of his resignation in November, President-elect. As correspondence tutors, as guides and as friends, many Chief Librarians serve the A.A.L. long after their promotion has led to this voluntary relinquishing of the limelight of office. These four are, we feel, no exception, and are not "lost." All four places have now been filled. Therein lies the strength of the Association.

### THE FUTURE.

It is our privilege to help man not only to rise above the tedium of the every-day, but also to master the fear of being blown up. If, through the agency of our libraries, we can help man to live more fully, in peace, and in

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happiness, we can be as proud of our role as William Faulkner was of his, when he said of his fellow writers: "I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice, but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance. The poet's, the writer's, duty is to write about these things. It is his privilege to help man endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him of the courage and honour and hope and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of his past. The poet's voice need not merely be the record of man, it can be one of the props, the pillars to help him endure and prevail."

E. A. CLOUGH, *President.*

W. TYNEMOUTH, *Honorary Secretary.*

Central Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1.

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## ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS

(Section of the Library Association).

### 57TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

to be held at the Pump Room, Bath,

On Sunday, 20th April, 1952, at 3 p.m.

### AGENDA.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting, held at Sale in the Town Hall on Sunday, 8th April, 1951.
2. To receive the Annual Report of the Council, including the Annual Report of the Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Auditors for the year ended 31st December, 1951.
3. To nominate and elect two Honorary Auditors, who, in accordance with Rule 5 (c), may not be members of the Council.
4. To consider the following notice of motion: "That the constitution of the A.A.L. Council be so amended as to provide that the retiring President be granted an *ex officio* seat on the Council for the year immediately following his term of office as President." (Submitted by *Liverpool and District Division* and approved by Council).
5. Any other business.

After the business meeting, the President will deliver his address.

Tea will be served at a cost of 2s. 6d. per head, and all those who wish to attend, including those who have already notified their intention of taking part in the *Week-end Conference*, should send their names to Miss B. C. Clark, St. Philip's Library, Trinity Road, Bristol, by April 10th.



**ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS**  
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**Statement of Income and Expenditure, 1st January to 31st December, 1951**  
**GENERAL ACCOUNT.**

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
<i>Income.</i>				<i>Expenditure.</i>			
To Balance brought forward from 1950 ..	136	11	9	By Printing Library Assistant ..	910	12	9
" Capitation grants ..	1678	5	6	" Distributing Library Assistant ..	209	11	7
" Subscriptions ..	4	15	0	" Payments to Divisions ..	460	10	0
" Library Assistant ..	139	15	3	" Councilors' Expenses ..	425	12	4
" Advertising ..	524	19	2	" Delegates' Expenses ..	33	17	9
" Stationery ..	60	6	6	" Library ..	165	0	0
" Conferences and Meetings ..	186	12	5	" Conferences and Meetings ..	266	13	3
" " Index to Progress " Sales ..	206	4	8	" Stationery ..	131	5	10
" " " Rentals ..	22	1	11	" " Index to Progress " ..	89	1	5
				" Clerical Expenses ..	85	15	0
				" Membership Lists ..	14	14	6
				" Election Expenses ..	67	15	0
				" Postage and Carriage ..	48	15	5
				" Miscellaneous ..	17	6	10
					2926	11	8
				" Balance carried forward to 1952 ..	33	0	6
					<u>£2959</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>

**BENEVOLENT FUND ACCOUNT.**

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
<i>Income.</i>				<i>Expenditure.</i>			
To Balance brought forward from 1950 ..	400	7	6	By Grant ..	10	0	0
" Interest on Post Office Savings Bank Account ..	1		7	" Balance carried forward to 1952 ..	401	19	3
" Appreciation in value of National Savings Certificates, January 1st to December 31st ..	11	10	2				
					<u>£411</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>3</u>



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## Statement of Assets and Liabilities. As on 31st December, 1951.

<i>Assets.</i>		<i>Liabilities.</i>	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
National Savings Certificates: Value on 31.12.51	397 13 2		
Post Offices Savings Bank Account ..	4 6 1	Balance of Fund on 31.12.51 ..	401 19 3
	<u>£401 19 3</u>		<u>£401 19 3</u>

## CORRESPONDENCE COURSES ACCOUNT.

<i>Income.</i>		<i>Expenditure.</i>	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
To Balance brought forward from 1950	156 5 11	By Tutors' Expenses ..	2180 0 6
" Students' Fees ..	2817 0 0	" Editors' Expenses ..	21 0 0
" Sale of Notebooks ..	4 8 6	" Hon. Education Secretary's Expenses ..	61 7 0
		" Postage and Carriage ..	47 0 0
		" Stationery ..	214 12 6
		" Refund of Fees ..	9 0 0
		" Standard Courses: ..	
		Compiling ..	33 12 0
		Editing ..	13 13 0
		Duplicating ..	233 5 4
		Collating ..	3 2 6
		Miscellaneous ..	283 12 10
			3 6 0
			<u>2819 18 10</u>
		Balance carried forward to 1952 ..	157 15 7
	<u>£2977 14 5</u>		<u>£2977 14 5</u>

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## PUBLICATIONS ACCOUNT.

<i>Income.</i>		<i>Expenditure.</i>	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
To Balance brought forward from 1950	393 17 0	By Stationery	.. ..
" Repayment of Loan	100 0 0	" Royalties	.. ..
" Sale of Publications	494 16 4	" Distribution	.. ..
		" Postage	.. ..
		" Insurance	.. ..
		" Clerical Expenses	.. ..
		" Advertising	.. ..
		" Printing "Primer of Assistance to Readers"	19 10 0
		" Printing "Primer of Classification"	389 5 0
		" Miscellaneous	372 10 0
			5 4 9
			965 19 7
		" Balance carried forward	22 13 9
			£988 13 4

All the above statements audited and found correct.

(Signed) L. B. HUMPHRIES

T. W. GRAHAM

Honorary Auditors.

January 16th, 1952.

J. S. BRISTOW, Honorary Treasurer.

## STATEMENT OF DIVISIONAL BALANCES AS AT 31st DECEMBER, 1951.

	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Bristol and District	Nil	North-Eastern	9 8 6
Devon and Cornwall	5 9 8	North Wales	5 7 4
Eastern	4 8 11	South-Eastern	7 13 9
East Midlands	9 9 1	South Wales	17 5
Greater London	67 11 10	Wessex	2 6 8
Kent	14 7 6	Yorkshire	23 3 3
Liverpool and District	7 1 5		
Manchester and District	1 10 3		
Midland	17 4 2		
		Total	£175 19 9

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### ***The University Assistant and the L.A. Examinations***

PETER HAVARD-WILLIAMS, *University of Liverpool Library.*

At a meeting, not long ago, of a local committee of the A.A.L., some recommendations for changes in the syllabus of the L.A. examinations were being considered. In the course of the discussion of one of the topics, a member of the committee exclaimed, "If a paper on X were introduced, graduates would have another unfair advantage over non-graduates!" What "X" was is unimportant, but what is important is the conception—or the mis-conception—that graduates, and particularly graduates in university (and some special) libraries, have a considerable advantage in sitting for library examinations over other members of the Library Association. This would seem to be a generally held opinion, in spite of a few protests from graduates themselves which have appeared in the correspondence columns of the *Record*. What exactly is the foundation for this opinion, and what do graduates and others working in university libraries think about it? It is the purpose of this article to examine the question from the university assistant's point of view.

Before considering the why's and wherefore's, however, we may well ask how it is that the opposition—for opposition there is—has arisen between university and non-university assistants? The answer is to be found (a) in the numerical superiority of non-university (and mainly public library) assistants over the very small minority of university librarians, and (b) in the fact that the present system of library examinations has grown up since the war, when a new generation of assistants has also grown up. More important, the growth of library services both inside and outside universities has coincided with a considerable increase in the prestige of the library profession: and this has induced an increasing specialisation which inevitably tends to divide one branch of the profession from another. From the university assistants' side, the most important consequence of this situation would seem to be that university assistants do not have a great deal of contact with their colleagues, and do not attend professional meetings where (if they do attend) they feel solitary and without any common basis of professional interest.

"Well," you may say, "so much the worse for university assistants. It is up to them to make their presence felt." This, however, is hardly a satisfactory answer—partly for the reasons given above. It is more satisfactory to examine some of the misconceptions which have arisen out of this lack of common ground. Some of the worst of these arise over the examinations, which are perhaps the most important professional topic of the younger assistants. The university assistant appointed, usually, with an honours degree, but with no professional qualifications or experience and just fresh from three or four years' academic studies becomes gradually aware of the need for further qualification. His attitude is similar to that of his colleagues who have entered the University Education Department to train for teaching. The kind of knowledge required for professional examinations is not only different from that needed for a degree examination, it is also—as knowledge—very much less exacting. Those who have undergone a rigorous mental

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training in a university are therefore inclined to regard practical knowledge as being of a different category, though very necessary. They would hardly be human if they did not! It is perhaps for this reason that graduates are often considered to be "uppish": furthermore, for those working in university libraries, a degree is the primary qualification, while library qualifications are secondary—they are what the advertisements call "desirable."

Practical issues, however, prevail and the young graduate settles down to his professional trials. He finds that he is exempt from the Entrance Examination (though he has to pay a fee for not sitting it) and can approach the Registration Examination without further let or hindrance. If he takes Group A first, he gets a fair specimen of the essential theory and practice of librarianship, though he will undoubtedly find subject cataloguing difficult as few universities are able to indulge in this luxury. If he is less ambitious (and, maybe, a little wiser), he will start with Group B, C or D. But if he does find that these Groups are easier, he will also find that they are not nearly so relevant to his experience (with the exception of the Bibliography paper). *Assistance to readers*, for instance, means something quite different in library and examination room. It does not consist of looking out useful chapters and books for students writing essays on Chaucer's use of allegory, Plato's simile of the cave or some aspect of the Protestant succession: in the examination room, there is much more concern over the contents of *Willing's Press Guide*, Kelly's directories or information about the cuckoo or holiday resorts. This is not to say that the first group of topics is more important or superior to the second: but we must recognise that the university assistant is doing a different job from that of his public library colleague, and finds it not a little frustrating to sit a paper in which the knowledge, not of his own work, but of somebody else's is really being tested. Similar remarks apply to the paper on Library Organisation. The general questions on this paper often relate more closely to public library problems, and answers have to be streamlined to fit in with the question as well as may be. *Suggest FIVE items suitable for discussion at a library staff meeting* . . . seems a reasonable question, but a university assistant would have to use his imagination for matters are more often not discussed at staff meetings, but in a more informal way especially in smaller libraries. It seems clear that the examiner setting this question had in mind a system which was large enough to warrant staff meetings: most university libraries are not. From the graduate's point of view, the most wearisome part of the Registration Examination is Group D (Literature of a special subject). He has just finished his degree, and is then expected to sit a paper which may or may not be on the same subject he has spent three years in acquiring. Moreover, it is the kind of paper he might have sat in his first year at the university—and so he has to begin all over again. Surely his degree has given ample proof of his ability to deal with a special subject, and to sit a paper of this type seems to be a mere formality in order to conform with a syllabus designed for the very people who have not had an extended period of study in the literature of a special subject?

Do graduates have so many advantages in tackling the L.A. examinations, then? Is it even surprising that some university assistants are a little sceptical as to their value? If there are strong arguments against this attitude (where it does exist), it does not remain without some justification. And

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yet, as a result of his training, the graduate must bring some assets with him in working for professional examinations. The main asset he possesses is that of knowing how to study and how to deal with the problems of examination technique. As Dr. Walford has pointed out in the *A.A.L. Guide to Examinations*, this is no mean asset. But *nota bene* the graduate has certainly had to work for it. His experience of knowing how to study and learn in the most economical way is balanced, for the non-graduate, by the latter's longer practical experience, which is equally important in this matter of examinations and which has been equally worked for. In other words, the approach of graduate and non-graduate to the examinations should be regarded as a potential partnership, in which each can offer a different but complementary set of abilities and qualities.

For the graduate, the Registration Examination is the crucial one, because, unless he has attended the course at the London School of Librarianship and Archives, this is the examination he *must* sit. Moreover, the Final Examination both in standard and in the number of the options it offers is more suited to his tastes and abilities—besides he has already had time to come to terms with the subject-matter of librarianship. If any criticism is felt with respect to this examination, it is largely directed to the balance and conception as a whole. It would be of more value to the university assistant if, for instance, he were allowed to offer two of the options from Part IV, instead of sitting Part I.

While the Entrance Examination does not affect the graduate working in a university library, it does affect the non-graduate assistant. In sitting this examination, the junior university assistant is at some disadvantage: for while we may argue that the graduate can deal satisfactorily with the Registration Examination because of his comparative maturity, the non-graduate has to sit an examination which is poorly adapted to his needs, though he has no special qualifications to offset this disadvantage. While he is gaining his experience, he finds that questions asked in the examinations do not ask for the fruits of this experience directly, and that he has to learn to serve his knowledge, constantly bearing in mind a different point of view and different stresses of interest and emphasis—a task which may not be beyond him, but which entails a strain which is rather unjustifiable. If he is asked, for example, to trace recent articles on a specific topic, the answer according to the syllabus would be to consult *The Subject index to periodicals* or the *Readers' guide to periodical literature*, but it would be unusual if anyone did this in a university library. On the Organisation and Method paper, too, there are usually one or two questions which an assistant from a university (or a special) library should not be expected to answer, if the answer is supposed to be based on his own personal experience as a librarian, e.g., *How is a Public Libraries Committee elected . . . ? Have you examined any bulletin or magazine published by a library? or A public library is owned by the ratepayers. What does this mean?* The university assistant can answer questions of this kind as a matter either of general knowledge or of book knowledge, but not as a practising librarian.

The purpose of this essay is not to air a number of grievances, but to show that graduates (and others) working in a university library do not have all the advantages! If they do have some advantages, these are not always

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the ones imagined by those "without the walls." By putting forward the graduate's point of view, we hope that some basis of understanding may be achieved; so that, while we appreciate the differing outlook of various branches of the profession, we can also regard diversity as an element which enriches a profession united in the fundamental aims of its programme.

### Active Divisions

SEVERAL Divisions have sent accounts of their Annual General Meetings with copies of the Annual Reports submitted to the members. *North Wales* met at Rhyl to hear Mr. S. Barton (Flintshire Co. L.), this year's Chairman, give an account of the aims and achievements of the Association. The Division publishes the *Cambria*, is preparing a Register of methods and has worked out a scheme for staff exchange. At Filton *Bristol and District* saw the Brabazon, the Bristol Aeroplane Company works and library and the Filton Branch of the Gloucestershire County Library. The Division's Annual Report records five attractive meetings, three of which culminated in visits to the Ballet Rambert, *Venus Observed*, and Mr. Ivor Brown lecturing on William Shakespeare. Sixty members of *South-Eastern Division* heard an author (Miss Barbara Willard), a publisher (Mr. John Hartstone of Collins), a bookseller (Mr. F. S. Hodges of Worthing), a librarian (Mr. H. Wilson, East Sussex County Library), and a regular reader (Mr. R. Wood, of Newhaven) discuss the impact of increased book prices on themselves and the public. The tendency of Divisions to give time to "current affairs" is to be applauded and the "Brophy's Penny-a-Book" debate, organized at Chaucer House by G.L.D. will be long-remembered. *G.L.D. News* reprints the impressive annual report of the Division and closes with an Election Comment by the Chairman (Mr. F. J. Owen, Kingston-on-Thames). For every member who voted there were two who did not. The arrival of papers days late, the presence of the pencilled name of the voter, alterations and others reasons debarred 13 per cent. of those who did vote from influencing the result. "It is advisable," Mr. Owen writes, "to know in which election one is taking part—a number of voting papers intended for other organizations found their way to the G.L.D. scrutineers."

Yorkshire reports a disappointing attendance for the joint meeting of the Yorkshire and Midland Divisions with the Birmingham and Yorkshire Branches of the Library Association. Eight assistants from Yorkshire travelled to Birmingham, contrasting strongly with the eighty Birmingham members who went to Sheffield for a joint-meeting on a previous occasion. After tours of the Central and newer branch libraries members assembled to hear Mr. Raymond Irwin on "The Art of passing examinations." The attendance may have reflected the state of professional education in the Yorkshire Division, or merely the proximity of Christmas.

To those Divisions who are not mentioned in these notes, your contributor addresses the proverb, "Silence was never written down."

F.D.C.

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### **Books for Students**

EVERYWHERE APUPA.

RANGANATHAN, S. R. *Classification and Communication*. 1951. (Delhi Univ. Press,\* London: G. Blunt and Sons, 21s.)

In general terms, the most convenient arrangement of documentary materials for the research worker is one in which the focal point of his interests is flanked on either side by fringe-topics, with no extraneous subjects coming in to scatter the references he needs. This book describes the focal point as "umbral," the fringe-topics as "penumbral," and all others as "alien." It suggests that the pattern of helpful arrangement should be Alien - Penumbral - Umbral - Penumbral - Alien, and follows the contemporary fashion of using the initial letters of a long phrase to form a short word expressive of the same idea. Ranganathan calls the pattern of helpful arrangement APUPA pattern, and states that the task of the classification is to produce a systematic arrangement which will reproduce the Apupa pattern for every user.

It is particularly significant that the denigration of Ranganathan's work, which has come from those who have read least of it, has usually turned on the assertion that his pre-occupation with classification has quite unbalanced his approach to librarianship. Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth. He has always insisted that the acme of librarianship is to be found in the work of the Readers' Adviser and Reference Librarian (he uses the latter term to indicate both, since he feels that their functions are the same), and that such librarians are at their best in special libraries. It is because the reference librarian needs sharper tools that Ranganathan spends so much time at the grindstone with Colon. He has perceived that the way out of the crisis in documentary organization is through classification, and in this book he sets out to show why.

The work is not a dull one: it is shot through with his personal beliefs and ideals. We get interesting analogies drawn from the whole of life, and quotations from oriental as well as occidental sources. The author proceeds in his usual analytical way, and never introduces a new idea without trying to clarify it by illustration. He has not confined himself to librarianship, but has ranged over many of the burning topics of to-day. He sees classification not only as a disciplined method of thought, or a way of arranging books, or a way of organizing knowledge through a catalogue, or an intelligent basis for eliciting a reader's requirements; but also as a means of international communication of intellectual products. He sees classification as an auxiliary language, quite unlike any of the other artificial languages in that it will express only facts, and never emotions: it is not to be spoken, nor can the "word-order" be manipulated at will—hence, no overtones of meaning can be conveyed. It is a language for intellectual communication—not for the man in the street.

The book is, unfortunately, not well produced. Misprints are too frequent, spacing of type most uneven, and the make-ready carried out in a slovenly manner. Yet we must not be too harsh. The composing is often done by a workman ignorant of the English language, with none of the technical and aesthetic background which is the natural inheritance of those



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born into a technological society. But continual proof-reading *can* cure many of these ills, and if Ranganathan demanded from his printer the same high standard he demands of his classifiers, not only India's publishing industry, but also her own standing in the world of letters would improve.

RANGANATHAN, S. R., *ed.* *Public library provision, and documentation problems.* 1951. (Delhi: Indian Library Association; London: G. Blunt and Sons, 24s.).

This second work from Delhi is much better in these respects. It is a collection of the papers given at the Ninth All-India Library Conference, held at Indore in 1951.

The work is grouped in two symposia ; the first dealing with the problems of establishing public libraries, and the second (much longer) with techniques. While in no way suggesting that this second symposium should not be published (there are some very valuable technical articles contained in it), I would question their value as conference papers. Unless the Indian librarian at conference is very different from the British animal of the same species, he will not be able to discuss such high level stuff in a crowded assembly. A conference, by its very nature, must proceed at the pace of the slowest, and impatience gets us nowhere.

Here are two books from India, both of which are very important for the Finals student in Part 4 (c). They are important, too (in a different way), to every librarian, for if he does not read them now, they will certainly play their part in shaping the technique of his profession in years to come.

Bip.

ASSOCIATION OF ASSISTANT LIBRARIANS: MIDLAND DIVISION. *Students' Guide to Library Practice in the Midlands.* 1952. (2s. 2d., post free. Obtainable from Miss E. Jerram, Public Library, Leek, Staffs.).

This type of publication is invaluable, for it shows the student where he can see examples of the various techniques quoted in the text books just as it shows him the points of interest in any particular library he may be visiting. But it does more than that, for it offers to the librarian a ready guide to the problems in library practice that confront him. From it he may find, for example, those libraries with collections of gramophone records, those that use B.N.B. for cataloguing, those with cork flooring. This is indeed a compressed manual of library economy.

Each of the students' guides printed so far shows an intelligent advancement on its predecessors. The Midland Division and their editor, Mr. H. A. Whatley, are to be congratulated.

E.A.C.